

REOPENING HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN FAQs

When will students have their temperature checked?

Symptom screening will be done by all parents/guardians at home each morning before the school day.

Children who either have symptoms, fever, or exposure to COVID-19 should not be sent on the bus or brought to school by parent.

Will the students have to wear face masks?

Order Requiring Universal Face Coverings

On July 1, 2020, the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health announced an [Order Requiring Universal Face Coverings](#). The order, signed under Secretary Levine's authority under the Disease Prevention and Control Act, outlines the situations when a mask must be worn and includes limited exceptions to the face-covering requirement.

Answers to questions school leaders may have regarding the application of this order in school settings is included below. Please reference this guidance as you plan to keep your students, staff, and school communities safe.

This page was created on July 6, 2020. Questions marked with an asterisk () were updated on July 17, 2020.*

***Does the [Order of the Secretary of the PA Department of Health Requiring Universal Face Coverings](#) apply to children and adults while in schools?**

Yes, this order applies to all students, staff and visitors age two and

older while in school entities, including public K-12 schools, brick and mortar and cyber charter schools, private and parochial schools, career and technical centers (CTCs), intermediate units (IUs); educational programming for students in non-educational placements such as residential settings (boarding schools), residential facilities, detention centers, and hospital settings; PA Pre-K Counts, Head Start Programs and Preschool Early Intervention programs; and Private Academic Nursery Schools and locally funded prekindergarten activities.

The Order was effective July 1, 2020 and will remain in effect until the Secretary of Health determines the public health risk is sufficiently reduced so that face coverings are no longer necessary as a widely utilized public health tool. For the safety of students, staff and families and to avoid community spread of COVID-19, students and staff are considered to be members of the public who are congregating in indoor locations. As such, they are required to adhere to this Order.

The order is effective immediately and applies to all children aged two and older.

Why did the Secretary of the PA Department of Health issue this Order?

The Secretary issued this Order to continue to protect all in the Commonwealth from the spread of COVID-19, mindful of the need to slow the increase in the number of cases as the Commonwealth reopens and in order to avoid the resurgence that is overwhelming the health care systems and public health systems in other states who have been less successful in reopening than the Commonwealth.

Is this Order temporary?

This Order remains in effect until further notice.

What type of mask complies with this Order?

The Order requires individuals to wear a "face covering." "Face covering" means a covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is wrapped around the lower face. A "face covering" can be made of a variety of synthetic or natural fabrics, including cotton, silk, or linen, and, for the purposes of the order, can include a plastic face shield that covers the nose and mouth. "Face coverings" may be factory-made, sewn by hand, or improvised from household items, including but not limited to, scarves, bandanas, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels. While procedural and surgical masks intended for health care providers and first responders, such as N95 respirators, would meet these requirements, these specialized masks should be reserved for appropriate occupational and health care settings.

***Under what circumstances are students permitted to remove their face coverings (e.g. masks and face shields)?**

Schools should provide face covering breaks throughout the day. Maintain a distance of at least 6 feet during these face covering breaks. Schools may allow students to remove face coverings when students are:

- Eating or drinking when spaced at least 6 feet apart;
- Seated at desks or assigned workspaces at least 6 feet apart;
- Engaged in any activity at least 6 feet apart (e.g., face covering breaks, recess, etc.); or
- When wearing a face covering creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task.

***Do students with disabilities need to wear face coverings?**

Children two years and older are required to wear a face covering unless they have a medical or mental health condition or disability,

documented in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or IDEA, that precludes the wearing of a face covering in school. Accommodations for such students should be made in partnership with the student's health care provider, school nurse, and IEP/504 team.

Do schools need to update/amend their Health and Safety Plans if they have already been submitted to PDE?

Health and Safety Plans must reflect this Order. Understanding the volatility and uncertainty of the COVID-19 virus, plans should be flexible enough to contemplate any future change in conditions.

Do updated/revised Health and Safety Plans need to be re-approved by local school boards?

Yes. While the Order must be implemented immediately, plan approval, if necessary, should occur at the next board meeting.

Do updated/revised Health and Safety Plans need to be resubmitted to PDE?

Yes. PDE should always have the most recently approved Health and Safety Plans on file for each Local Education Agency (LEA).

Does the Order apply to athletes and sports activities?

Yes. Everyone must wear a face covering, such as a mask, unless they fall under an exception listed in Section 3 of the Order. Coaches, athletes and spectators must wear face coverings unless they are outdoors and can consistently maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet. Athletes are not required to wear face coverings while actively engaged in workouts and competition that prevent the wearing of face coverings, but must wear face coverings when on the sidelines, in the dugout, etc. and anytime 6 feet of social distancing is not possible.

Must an individual provide evidence that they qualify for an exception to the Order?

No. Per the Order, students are not required to show documentation that an exception applies.

Are there special requirements when it comes to the type or material of the mask?

What type of mask complies with this Order?

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Can masks have patterns and designs, or will they have to be a solid color?

They do not have to be a solid color. Mask/Face Covering must be school appropriate and not cause an educational distraction.

Administration has the right to ask a student to change his/her mask if they believe it is causing a distraction to learning.

Will the District be providing face masks to the students?

The District purchased a washable face covering for all students and staff who need one.

What if my student cannot wear a face mask?

Children two years and older are required to wear a face covering unless they have a medical or mental health condition or disability, documented in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or IDEA, that precludes the wearing of a face covering in school. Accommodations for such students should be made in partnership with the student's health care provider, school nurse, and IEP/504 team.

If parents/guardians buy a face shield, will students still have to wear a mask?

What type of mask complies with this Order?

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N95 respirators, would meet these requirements, these specialized masks should be reserved for appropriate occupational and health care settings.

What if a child loses their mask in school during the day?

The District purchased a washable face covering for all students and staff who need one. We will be able to provide help with this.

What kind of measures will be taken to keep students safe in the classrooms? On the bus?

Increase Social Distancing & Hygiene Practices.

Follow CDC's Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Schools.

Common areas (frequently touched surfaces) will be cleaned and disinfected throughout the day (scheduled protocol).

Classrooms will be cleaned and disinfected in the evenings.

Air mister disinfecting machines have been purchased by SASD to clean and sanitize our buildings daily.

Students will be permitted to have water bottles; however, water fountains will be closed for use.

Classrooms and common areas will be ventilated with additional circulation of outdoor air when possible.

Face coverings will be required during the State Mandate implemented by Governor Wolf on July 3. When the face coverings are no longer mandated, we will continue to increase the use of PPE (masks, gloves, face shields), which will be recommended, encouraged and provided for those students who need them.

Schedules will be as static as possible.

Restrict interactions between groups of students as much as possible.

Protocols for distancing students' desks/seating.

Procedures for breakfast and lunch (Grab-N-Go, Gymnasium and Cafeteria).

Posting of signs.

Restricting non-essential visitors and volunteers.

Limit the sharing of materials among students.

Staggering the use of communal spaces and hallways, including recess.

Encouraging classroom teachers to conduct lessons outside (weather permitting) to allow for more social distancing.

Reduce the amount of students at recess at a given time by creating a recess schedule.

Hold Physical Education activities outdoors to the greatest extent possible.

Socially distance Music classes to the greatest extent possible.

Clean and disinfect shared items between uses (Textbooks that are shared, Technology, Art Supplies, PE Equipment).

Keep each student's belongings separate from one another to the greatest extent possible.

Students with clear/mesh backpacks can carry them throughout the day to reduce locker usage.

Create one-way traffic patterns in hallways.

Keep students in one location to the greatest extent possible.

Stagger hallway movement when movement is necessary.

Parents have the option and are ENCOURAGED to transport their child to school.

Buses will be disinfected before and after routes.

Face coverings and assigned seating will be required on buses.

Roof hatches and windows will be opened whenever possible to allow for the best ventilation.

Are there special precautions for special education students with higher risk?

Yes. Please contact Sherry Glosek, Supervisor of Special Education, for precautions.

Will the District be purchasing air purifiers with HEPA air filters large enough for each and every single space students & faculty will be throughout the day?

Although we have not purchased HEPA air filters, we do have filters on our air handling system and we will be increasing the amount of circulated outdoor air when possible.

How is lunch going to be held? In classroom vs. lunchroom?

MS/HS – Split between cafeteria and gymnasium.

Elementary – Cafeteria. One grade level at a time.

Meal condiments will be limited and provided to students on the serving trays.

Students will not be permitted to serve themselves for items such as fruit and/or vegetable selections.

Staff will serve students all meal components.

Selection of fruits and vegetables will be limited.

Individual containers/to-go type containers will be used to the greatest extent possible.

Student dining areas and cafeteria serving areas will be thoroughly cleaned between lunch periods.

Breakfast and Lunch will be served in cafeterias, gymnasiums, classrooms, and other common areas as needed.

Hand sanitizer protocol provided at stations within the cafeterias, prior to and after consuming food or beverages.

Parents /guardians will be encouraged to deposit funds using the online payment portal, avoiding the handling of cash and checks in the cafeterias.

If they have to eat in their classrooms, will they still be getting hot meals or will everything be cold (like sandwiches)?

Food will be hot as normal.

If a student brings their own lunch, will there be a microwave in classroom to warm up their food?

Not necessary since food served will be hot.

Will the dress code be relaxed this year?

Spirit Days will be allowed each day of school for the first month of school and re-evaluated monthly. More information to follow.

However, students must still wear the appropriate bottoms as per the Dress Code.

We also have a clothing closet to help with those in need.

Mask/Face Covering must be school appropriate and not cause an educational distraction. Administration has the right to ask a student to change his/her mask if they believe it is causing a distraction to learning.

Will students still be required to use a clear or mesh backpack?

Students with clear/mesh backpacks can carry them throughout the day to reduce locker usage.

How will the desks be arranged in each classroom? Will there be plastic/clear dividers to make cubicles?

Desks will be spaced out to allow for social distancing as much as possible. Desks will be facing one direction (no face to face seating). We do not have dividers to make cubicles.

Will there be routine hand washing breaks throughout the day, especially before lunch?

Hand sanitizer protocol provided at stations within the cafeterias, prior to and after consuming food or beverages.

All staff will be trained on healthy hygiene practices so they can teach these to students.

Ensure handwashing strategies include washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, use of an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol will be used.

Use of CDC handwashing resources that include health promotion materials, information on proper handwashing technique, and tips for families to help children develop good hand washing habits.

Post CDC “Germs Are Everywhere” and “Wash Your Hands” Posters in all District Cafeterias and Restrooms and other high traffic areas.

Will students be allowed to have hand sanitizer at their individual desks?

Yes.

Can classes be held outdoors while the weather is nice to allow social distancing? Maybe lunch can be outside for certain classes and not others to help social distance during this time.

Yes. We will encourage classroom teachers to conduct lessons outside (weather permitting) to allow for more social distancing. This includes lunch when possible.

How will dismissal be handled?

Principals will develop staggered dismissal times (approximately 5 minute differential in each building).

Will the Vo-Tech be open for students in grades 10-12 this school year? And if so are students who choose to do virtual classes online still be allowed to attend a class at the Vo-Tech this year?

Yes and yes.

What safety measures are being taken at the Vo-Tech? How is social distancing going to work for these programs?

Dr. Catino will be releasing information on this in the near future.

What if my child has been enrolled in Educere at Shamokin Area in the past?

They can enroll in our online (Google Classroom) option. Please contact your child's Principal's Office.

What are the requirements as far as handing in work if my child attends virtually?

This can be done via Google Classroom. It can also be done by emailing a picture of the work to your child's teacher.

Are there concerns of background disturbances interrupting teaching while a student is connected virtually?

Teachers can mute the online students when needed.

If the State mandates all schools close again and students attend virtually, will those students already attending online have an advantage?

No. Students will not have an unfair advantage over another student. Our plan is to be seamless in case of a shutdown.

So how about only teaching the basic classes like math, science, English, social studies etc. and not teach the elective classes?

All courses must be taught. Graduation requirements are dependent on it.

What about splitting students into two groups, going 7 days on 7 days off? Split the students into groups by last name (i.e. begins with the letter A-L) and have them attend the first week. The next week have them stay home giving them that week to do homework and study. If they have questions they can ask them online. Then have the rest of the students attend the second week, and alternate.

These options have been discussed. Our current plan allows the most flexibility for families and does not force a family into attending or being at home. It gives each family flexibility according to their individual needs.

How is the District going to handle those who continue to travel out of our area for vacations to known virus hot spots, specifically those who travel to such areas and have less than 14 days before the 1st day of school to ensure they're symptom free?

The Department of Health's guidance states if "you have traveled, or plan to travel, to an area where there are high amounts of COVID-19 cases, it is **recommended** that you stay at home for 14 days upon return to Pennsylvania". The guidance goes on to state that "if you travel to the following states, you **will need to quarantine** for 14 days upon return." The guidance then lists specific states.

The Department's "will need to quarantine" language concerning the listed states has created confusion, because it could be construed as a mandatory order and not a recommendation.

On July 8, 2020, the Department of Health stated during a conference call with state and county officials that its guidance is **not** an official quarantine order. If someone travels to one of the states, it is **recommended** they self-quarantine to avoid the risk of spreading the virus to others.

Those individuals must continue to practice social distancing, wear a mask, and keep track of their own temperature (staff), and report if they have symptoms and stay at home if they experience any symptoms.

Same question for those who take vacations during the school year... will the District allow for or require the mandated quarantine for both staff and students who take vacations throughout the school year?

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Those individuals must continue to practice social distancing, wear a mask, and keep track of their own temperature (staff), and report if they have symptoms and stay at home if they experience any symptoms.

What happens if a student tests positive for COVID-19? Will parents be made aware? Will all students be tested and/or quarantined?

Any staff member or student who exhibits symptoms of Covid-19 or a new history of exposure, will be placed in “isolation” at the designated “isolation” location until transportation home is provided. While waiting for transportation, the staff or student will be required to wear a mask unless medically contraindicated. If staff/student’s medical condition deteriorates, 911 may be called if needed for transport to hospital setting.

Staff and students will need to follow up with PCP for further evaluation and possible testing. If further medical attention is not sought, then the staff member or student must self-quarantine for 14 days and exhibit no symptoms of Covid-19 for three days without the use of medication.

Close off the area used by a person testing positive for COVID-19 and do not use before cleaning and disinfecting.

Notify staff and families of confirmed cases while maintaining confidentiality.

An ill student and/or faculty member should remain masked the entire time, even if social distancing. This helps prevent additional droplet spread and would be highly recommended.

Any staff member or student who was recently isolated/quarantined may return to the school setting when at least one of the following criteria are met:

1. Testing for Covid-19 is negative and primary care provider (PCP) issues a return to school order.
2. Staff or student has self-quarantined for 14 days and is symptom free for past three days without the use of medications.
3. Staff or student has a positive Covid-19 antibody test and is symptom free for three days without the use of medications.
4. PCP signed return to school order.

Provide regular update information on SASD website and on social media.

Prepare parents and families for remote learning if school is temporarily dismissed/closed.

Clear methods of communication: website, BlackBoard Connect Call Out System, social media.

Confidentiality will be maintained to protect the privacy of any person(s) involved.

When a confirmed case is identified, PA DOH should be involved.

The Superintendent will rely on DOH for instruction on the closure of classrooms or schools.

The Superintendent will reach out to the State DOH to ensure they are updated should a case be reported and take guidance from there.

The Superintendent will rely on the DOH for contact tracing.

What is the criteria for not sending a student to school?

Are you/is the student experiencing any of the following?

Group A 1 or more symptoms	Group B 2 or more symptoms
Fever (100.4 or higher) Cough Shortness of breath Difficulty breathing	Sore throat Runny nose/congestion Chills New lack of smell or taste Muscle pain Nausea or Vomiting Headache Diarrhea

Stay home if, you or the student:

- Have one or more symptoms in Group A **OR**
- Have two or more symptoms in Group B **OR**
- Are taking fever reducing medication.

Will students be moving from class to class?

Elementary will be self-contained.

MS will be grouped with same class all day but will move from class to class together.

HS will move from class to class.

What happens if we go “yellow”?

We will follow the orders of the Governor.

What are the expectations for high school gym classes if you are doing the virtual option?

It will be the same as we did in the Spring. PE teachers will develop lessons that are geared to both in-person and online students.

If your children are doing the at home virtual option and you lose internet what will happen?

Teachers will be providing video lessons posted to Google Classroom that can be viewed after hours in case students are having trouble being live on Google Classroom.

How will the mask and social distancing requirement be enforced?

Students not in compliance will be addressed by faculty, staff, and administration. During the passing of classes, faculty will be required to stand in the halls to monitor and supervise the students. In the event that a student is non-compliant, the administration can require the student to participate online instead of in-person.

If you are doing the virtual option, how will you turn in homework for higher level math classes, like calculus, and how will you take tests because you are unable to show our work on Go Formative and Google Forms?

Students can work on paper from home and email a picture of their work to their teacher.

Will there be any orientation nights? What about the kids going into kindergarten or 7th grade and don't know their way around the school?

Teachers will be doing virtual orientations.

If school ends up getting shut down again by the governor, what will that look like? Will schoolwork be graded in order to pass or fail? Will there be any curves for the parents that will still have to work and then come home and do schooling with their children?

We will offer the live online (synchronous) option and/or offline (asynchronous) option for all students. Students will be graded.

If we decide to send our children back to school, will they be seen on the virtual option when the teacher is trying to teach.

Yes, but only by the teacher. The teacher will place the Chromebook on the desk in front of the room to go live. It will not be facing the students in the class.